The Evening World Daily Magazine

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1919

Brest, the French Seaport 1,700,000 U. S. Soldiers Will Have Passed Through On Their Way Home

Debarkation Port Is Now an American City With American Improvements All Made by Americans.

U. S. Engineers Paved Its Streets, Improved Its Waterfront Facilities, Built a Railroad and a Cold Storage Plant—U. S. Army Conducts an Electric Light and Power Plant, an Up-to-the-Minute Fire Department and a Police Force.

By Martin Green

FEW of the approximately 2,250,000 soldiers in the American Expeditionary Forces abroad have seen or will see Paris, and the experience of most of them carries but indistinct memories of many towns.

There is one French city, however, which will be widely talked about in days to come by our returning soldiers, and that is Brest, the best seaport in France, through which something like 1,700,000 will have passed, homeward bound, by the time we have brought the last of our fighting and auxiliary forces home. A considerable percentage of the soldiers now returning or to return through Brest were landed at that port when they went into the great adventure, and for these the quaint-old city has double interest. There is a great deal of difference between the Brest of to-day and the Brest of the summer and autumn of 1918.

Before the war, Brest had a population of 85,000. To-day the French population is probably 100,000, and there are about 60,000 American soldiers in and about the city. Also in and about Brest are some 2,000 German prisoners of war working on the roads, cleaning the streets and engaged in construction enterprises for the American Army. The army employs on the docks, in the railroad yards and in the coaling of transports and the operation of lighters 3,000 negro stevedores, who left their happy homes down South to work in a clime they were told was sunny. They see the sun about once every thirty days, and there are no watermelons in France. Naturally, those negroes are not superlatively happy. They have been told the war is over, but they don't believe it.

The writer spent ten days in Brest. The dominating impression of the city which rests in his memory is a vista of wet, glistening umbrellas. Rain fell every day of the ten days, and on nine of the ten days rain fell all day and all night. In view of this weather condition a visitor in Brest is astonished by the spectacle of washing hanging out on clothes lines and fences. The person who hangs out washing to dry in Brest is the champion optimist of the world.

The influence of American operation in Brest is everywhere apparent. The streets are crowded all day and far into the evening by men in American uniforms. Brest is divided from the waterfront in for a distance of about three-quarters of a mile by an inlet lined by docks, which is deep enough to accommodate large ocean going ships. A great swinging steel bridge crosses the inlet and it is a novelty to Americans, for it opens in the middle to let boats pass through, and the bridge when open swings back until each half is parallel with the bank. For the protection of the delicate machinery controlling the movements of the great mass of steel the bridge is paved with a thick carpet fashioned of rope.

Americans have dubbed that part of Brest lying to the westward of the inlet "Brooklyn." A residential part of the city through which troops pass to and from the Pontanezen Camp is called "Harlem," and the district immediately about the camp is called "The Bronx." There is also a part of the city known as "Hell's Kitchen," but it is surrounded at all hours by an impassable guard of military and naval policemen and no soldiers or sailors go there.

When Brest was picked as the chief port for the handling of our troops arriving in France, the harbor facilities consisted of four small docks. We took over two of them and immediately began the construction of an extension to one, which has just been completed. This improvement is a closed pier 900 feet long and 100 feet wide, equipped with electrically operated hoisting machinery. The pier was built by our engineering forces of material imported from the United States.

The waterfront streets and the road leading up to the city were paved with a macadam mixture at the time of the arrival of our advance expedition. This pavement was quickly pulverized by the great army trucks. After long negotiations with the French Government consent was obtained to pave the waterfront streets and the main road up the hill with Belgian blocks. The work was accomplished without halting of traffic. About four miles of pavement was laid and the waterfront of Brest was transformed from a mudhole to dry territory.

On Feb. 25 our engineering forces completed the construction of a branch railway line, four miles in length, of standard gauge running from the railroad yards at the water's edge to the Pontanezen Camp. This railroad, which involved in its construction some tremendous engineering problems, does away largely with the trucking difficulty. In the camp proper there is a narrow gauge railway reaching every kitchen and storehouse and connected with the standard gauge railhead.

On the arrival of our engineers at Brest they found on the water front a plant for manufacturing ice which had just been completed by an enterprising corporation engaged in the fishing industry. The plant had been in process of construction for seven years. We took it over, connected it with a cold storage warehouse and were enabled, by this almost miraculous happening, to care for our meat and other perishable supplies.

In our army warehouses on the Brest water front we carry at all times supplies valued at between $6,000,000 and $7,000,000. For the protection of this property police and fire departments are maintained. The fire department has a membership and uses apparatus equal to that of the department of any large American city. The army also operates its own electric light and power plant.

The army engineers have just completed on the water front a series of sheet, iron and wooden buildings which is extensive enough to keep all troops waiting to embark on transports under shelter from the rain. They also built a large rest house and hospital for the Red Cross. The rest house, which furnishes a comfortable lounging-place for officers and men and boasts of remarkably clever interior decorations painted by army artists passing through, is in charge of Miss Florence Harrison. She has thirty-three assistants, who work in three eight-hour shifts every day and night in the week, suppiying hot coffee and chocolate and doughnuts and sandwiches and cigarettes to the soldiers passing through. The hospital is in charge of Matron Lewis.

Brest is a cosmopolitan centre these days. Besides American soldiers the streets are crowded with men in various uniforms of the French service, American and French sailors, Japanese from a fleet of cruisers resting in the harbor, English soldiers in charge of German prisoners who march to and fro through the streets in their picturesque green uniforms all day long; French territorial troops, white, black and brown; grimy firemen from gloomy freighters, and women from all over the world.

The largest hotel is the Continental, which advertises steam heat and elevator service. The steam heat is turned on one hour a day, the elevator has not been operated since Aug. 4, 1914, and no water runs through the pipes above the second floor in the day time. The only stove in the hotel is located in the cafe on the ground floor, overlooking a muddy little park, and when the rain is heavy it comes through the roof of the cafe and drops on the stove and the bored Americans sitting around the stove, and every time this happens Madame, the proprietress, says she will have the roof fixed to-morrow—but it is a safe bet that the last American officer passing through Brest on the way home and stopping at the Continental Hotel will see rain falling through the roof of the cafe.

American Motor Trucks at Brest © Int. Film Ser.

Water front section of Brest and high bluffs that back it © Int. Film Ser.

"Thats me all over, Mable"

BY LIEUT. EDWARD STREETER OF THE 27TH (N. Y.) DIVISION

(Author of "Dere Mable")

Illustrated by CORP. G. WILLIAM BRECK, Also of the 27th

First of a New Series of Letters to "Dere Mable" From "Bill" the Rookie Describing His Further Adventures in the Army.

DERE MABLE:

I take my pen in hand to tell you what do you think I done now? I left the infantry an gone back into the artillery. The Captin hated to let me go. He said the Artillery Colonel was a friend of his. I guess thats why he finally said all right. It wasnt that I was scared of the infantry. I guess you know that I aint scared of anything that walks on two legs except the measles. The artillerys really more dangerous than the infantry cause you stand in one place so they can get a good line on you while in the infantry your running round all the time.

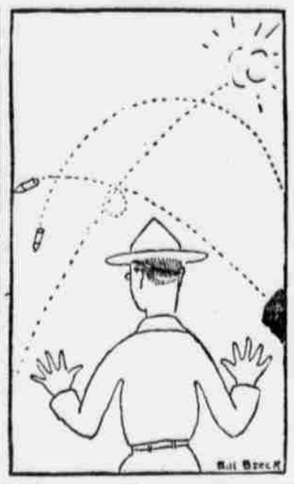
Seein the Captin was so jealous of me I thought a fello with brains would have more chance over here. I tried to transfer as an officer but the Captin said I better go over as a private and as soon as they saw what kind of a fello I was theyd fix me all right. He seemed to wake up a little when he saw I was goin. Im going to put in my applicashun for an officer as soon as I get a chance.

I didnt go back to the same battery I was in before cause youll remember that the Captin and I didn't get along very well. Couldnt seem to agree on nothin. I thought it would be pleasanter for me an him to if I went to another battery.

It almost seemed like they was waitin for me cause the day after I came over they hitched up the horses and drove the cannons out to the range. Its kind of hard to explain to a girl like you what a range is. The only way I can explain it is that it aint nothin like a range. There aint nothin here but mountins and we can fire all we want without hittin nothin but the mountins and once in a while maybe one of the mountin ears. But they say there so tough they don't mind it a bit. Thats a funny thing about artillery, Mable. The object seems to be not to hit nothin. The day we got out here I heard the Captin say "Well Im glad were way out in a place like this where we dont run no danger of hittin nothin." All I said was "I like to see a fello careful Captin, but if thats all your worryin about you needent have taken so much trouble." The longer I know Captins the less I understand them.

This is the rainy season. The south is a wonderful country for wether cause everything is divided off so well. There is three seasons. The cold season, the hot season and the rainy season. Thats what makes the place so good. It would be awful tiresome if you was always freezin to death or always soaked or always bakein. Now you get four months of each. It makes a change for a fello.

Theyve put me on the speshul detail. The speshul detail, Mable, is a bunch of fellos what knows more than any one else in the camp. I sit on a hill all day with a little telephone in a lunch box and take messages. They got an awful system of sending messages in the artillery. Ill be sittin there thinkin of you an waitin for lunch and somebody says "Hello" an I says "Hello" just like a regular fone. And then they say "Heres a message from mmmmmm." Its always the same fello. I dont know who he is. And then they say "Tell Captin mmmmmmmm to mmm mmmmm at once. Please repeat." And then I repeat and whoever it is says "No, No" and you dont here any more. I guess its some kind of a code they have. I dont believe the Captin is on to it cause you ought to have heard what he said the other day. I guess he was talkin about the fello on the other end. I never heard your father do better.

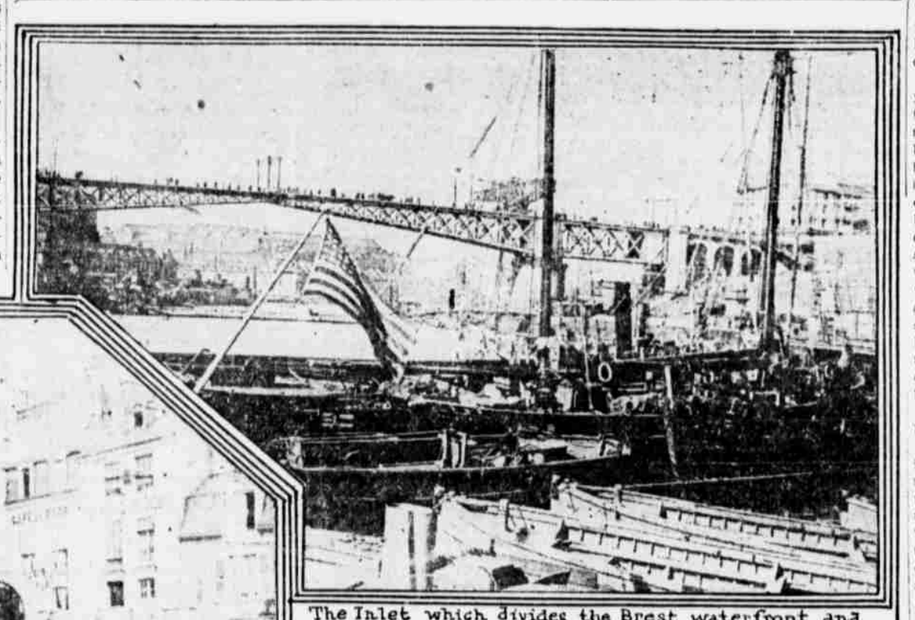


"WE CAN FIRE ALL WE WANT WITHOUT HITTIN' NOTHIN'."

Its awful dangerous work cause where I sit aint more than half a mile from the shells. If they ever put a curve on one of them its good night Willie. I aint scared of course. I just menshuned it sos ybu wouldnt worry. Ill tell you more about the telefone the next time. I may know more about it myself then.

Yours till they curve one

BILL.



The Inlet which divides the Brest waterfront and steel bridge which spans it © Underwood Underwood

EVENING WORLD PUZZLES

The Market Basket Puzzle

By Sam Loyd

A CONSUMER went before the Food Commissioner and complained. Said he:

"I can't fill the market basket at present rates. Now, let us imagine it is full, at these awful prices. I figure then that one-third more food for one-third less money would make a square deal, and then I could fill the basket for $3 less than it now costs."

How much does it cost to fill that basket at present prices?

Answer to Which Won This Race?

It would be a tie if it were a straightaway race, but in running to the stake and back (75 yards) each half of the race would be 112½ feet, and the dog would be compelled to make 23 leaps to the stake, and the same number in returning, which be 46 leaps of 5 feet each, so the dog goes 230 feet in all, a waste of 5 feet. The cat would go over and back in 76 leaps, which would call for 228 feet, so Tabby wins the race by 2 feet.

SCIENCE AND INVENTION.

To enable automobiles to travel over ice or frozen roads an inventor has patented a spiked steel band to replace the rear tire.

* * *

By simplifying the system of tickets given to London's omnibus passengers a saving of 100 tons of paper pulp a year was effected.

* * *

A typewriter desk with numerous pigeonholes and drawers and a chair have been so combined that they fold together and form a trunk.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 1919

How to Keep Young All Your Life

A "Youngster" at Sixty

Third of a Series of Three Interviews With Dr. Eugene Lyman Fisk of the Life Extension Institute

By Marguerite Mooers Marshall

EVEN at three score years it is not necessary to be actually old. Because you are sixty you need not hobble about with a cane, your shoulders stooped, your joints "rheumaticky," your insides fighting with some almost incurable organic disease. The young old woman who dances, entertains and dresses like her granddaughter instead of subsiding gracefully into the corner is a common figure in the life of New York. There is no fixed law of nature against the evolution of the young old man, the man who at sixty keeps his waist-line, his color, his vitality and his health.

"The normal American, if he takes proper care of himself, should live to be 100 or over," says Dr. Eugene Lyman Fisk, Director of Hygiene of the Life Extension Institute, at No. 25 West 45th Street.

"The traditional 'three score years and ten' are fixed by no natural law," he continued, "but by the conditions under which men live. Man has the power to modify these conditions, either for better or for worse. In many respects he has improved his environment. He has learned successfully to meet and overcome many of the agencies seeking to destroy him.

"Already there is sufficient knowledge to transform the health conditions in this country, if knowledge could be translated into action, if the people would simply lay hold of the health and happiness that are theirs for the claiming."

"But why is the average man more or less broken at sixty?" I asked Dr. Fisk. "And how can he take care of himself in order to keep young and vigorous at that age?"

Then the doctor explained that the danger, and a danger that actually has increased in the last thirty years, is an increase in the so-called degenerative diseases. It is they which take the sparkle of youth from the eye, the spring of youth from the step, the glorious energy and joy of youth from the soul.

"The diseases due to faulty living habits, to overeating and underexercising are on the increase among men over forty," he declared. "Affections of the heart, blood vessels and kidneys are responsible for the high death rate in middle life.

"The underlying cause is lack of adjustment. From an outdoor, muscle-working race we are becoming an indoor, brain-working one. This transition often is an individual affair. It is not at all uncommon for men to acquire a heavy muscular development in early life and subsequently drift into comparatively sedentary work where these muscles become more of a burden than a prop.

"Then we all live at too high tension. We talk too loud, hurry too hard, worry to much. The American doesn't know how to stop working. In England a man sets before himself a certain sum which he wishes to possess when he's fifty and on which he knows he can live comfortably the rest of his life. When he has attained this amount he begins to take life easily. If the American has a fortune at fifty, he keeps on making money just the same. Or if, by any chance, he tries to stop, he promptly goes to pieces because he doesn't know how to play.

"If a man asks, 'How shall I live in order to be healthy and young at sixty' the general answer is, 'Temperance all along the line—in eating, drinking, working, playing and even in resting.' It is possible to 'rest out' on the one hand or to 'wear out' on the other.

"But what is temperance for one man may be excess for another. Hence the most important step in protecting against degenerative maladies is to have a thorough physical examination, such as we give here at the institute, at least once a year, so that life may be regulated according to one's physical equipment.

"Why not treat your body at least as well as you treat your automobile? Why not take your body to a 'service station' once in a while, and have it looked over? Why be more afraid of such words as 'calorie,' 'protein' or 'vitamines' in relation to the care of your body than you are of 'carburetor' or 'ignition,' when it is a question of the care of your car?

"The diseases that menace the youth and health of men of forty, fifty or sixty, do not come on over night, like diphtheria or scarlet fever. It takes time for Bright's disease or heart trouble to develop. If an incipient weakness is discovered at an early stage it frequently can be cured by suitable health measures. On the other hand, a man or woman may be suffering from some defect in the vital machinery for months or years without self-knowledge. Then comes some great anxiety, some sudden strain, and the individual crumples. If the sapping disease had been detected in time and measures taken to eradicate or check it, years might have been added to the life involved."

"Are many men made old too soon by overwork?" I asked Dr. Fisk.

"Hard work in which one has an interest, not carried to the point of undue strain or to interference with normal sleep, exercise, diet, &c., is not in itself harmful," he replied. "'Lopsided' work may be an important factor in bringing on premature disease. The brain worker needs some physical work and mental play. The manual laborer or mechanic needs some physical play and mental work.

"There is in the world to-day a splendid example of how to work hard and yet keep young and vigorous in mind and body," added the doctor, a note of frank enthusiasm coloring his quiet voice. "That example is the man Clemenceau. Look at him—at seventy-nine! Rightly, Lloyd George at the Peace Table called him 'the grand young old man.' Isn't he an inspiration to every American who longs for a vigorous and useful youth which shall last all his life?

"A good general formula for keeping young through and beyond middle age includes a lifelong habit of sane exercise, eating lightly enough after the fortieth birthday to keep the weight down to the standard and even a few pounds below it, and avoidance of all forms of excess.

"It is not so much necessary to *fight disease* as to *cultivate health* for the happiness, contentment and moral gain that it brings. And, speaking from the point of view of society, we can not afford to have a large death rate between the ages of forty-five and sixty-five. That is the period of life when men and women are often equipped to make their finest contribution to civilization."

TOO SMART.

A STRANGER in the city was looking for a direction the other morning. He looked about him and then beckoned to an Italian laborer who was working in a trench nearby.

"Hey, Tony!" he called, "how do I get to the City Hall?"

The workman countered his question with another.

"How do you know my name Tony?" he grinned.

"Guessed it."

"Pretty smart guesser, eh? Then you guess how far it is to City Hall."